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GOVERNOR MARTIN O'MALLEY ANNOUNCES DHR SECRETARY BRENDA DONALD TO STEP DOWN, ACCEPTS LEADERSHIP ROLE AT ANNIE E. CASEY FOUNDATION

ANNAPOLIS, MD (June 25, 2010) – Governor Martin O'Malley announced today that Department of Human Resources Secretary Brenda Donald has accepted a new senior position at the Annie E. Casey Foundation after three years of reforms at the historically troubled agency. Together, Governor Martin O'Malley and DHR Secretary Brenda Donald endeavored to radically reform Maryland's child welfare system, resulting in drastic reductions in foster care and group home placements, reforms to Maryland's outdated child support system, and increases in family setting placements for foster children.

"I want to thank Brenda Donald for her service to the people of Maryland over the past three years. Her professionalism and reform-minded approach to leading DHR has benefited children and adults throughout our state," said Governor O'Malley. "Brenda was appointed to lead one of our largest and most complicated state agencies. Her steady leadership will be missed."

Donald will step down as Secretary of Human Resources effective July 23, 2010. She has accepted the role of Vice President for the Center for Effective Family Services and Systems at the Annie E. Casey Foundation, a private charitable organization dedicated to helping build better futures for disadvantaged children in the United States.

"It has been my distinct honor to help the O'Malley/Brown Administration achieve notable outcomes for foster children, improve the way we process benefit applications and work to strengthen our child support collections," said Donald. "I am excited to move onto the next phase of my career and help other states implement some of Maryland's successful strategies."

Under Secretary Donald's leadership, the Department of Human Resources implemented *Place Matters*, an ambitious initiative that promotes safety, family strengthening, permanency, and community based services for children and families in child welfare. As a result:

- Nearly 20 percent fewer children have been placed in foster care.
- More than 50 percent fewer foster children are placed in group homes.
- 77 percent of children placed in the foster system are now placed into family settings, a 10 percent increase from four years ago.
- More than 2,225 foster families have been recruited under the O'Malley-Brown Administration.
- Nearly 2,000 adoptions have been finalized under the O'Malley-Brown Administration.

The reforms implemented by Governor O'Malley and Secretary Donald aimed to improve the lives of children who find themselves within the social work system, including:

- Fought for legislation to update the state's child support guidelines for the first time in 22 years.

- Provided all front-line social welfare and child welfare workers with cell phones, improving efficiency and communications.
- Improved compliance rates for benefit applications such as food stamps and cash assistance.
- Reforms the Baltimore City Department of Social Services and strengthened its management.
- Collected \$1.5 billion in child support payments and redistributed to custodial parents, continuing the upward trend in collections, even in a tough economy.
- Invested federal Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds to create 100 full time jobs for previous Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) customers.
- Restricted new group homes from opening unnecessarily, allowing new group homes to open only if there is a specific need in an area, focusing resources on family-setting placements instead.

Donald will serve as Vice President for the Center for Effective Family Services and Systems at the Annie E. Casey Foundation. In her new position as a member of the Foundation's senior leadership team, Donald will be leading the Center's work of improving outcomes for children living in the country's most fragile families. The focus of the Center is to promote policies and identify best practices that support family-strengthening interventions, provide data-driven accountability for public systems, and bring evidence-based interventions to scale.

"Brenda Donald is a recognized leader who has dedicated her career to improving children and family services and leading governmental reform efforts," said Patrick McCarthy, president of the Annie E. Casey Foundation. "We are confident that her extensive knowledge and experience will help build on our work for years to come."

Prior to being appointed DHR Secretary in February of 2007, Donald was Deputy Mayor for Children, Youth, Families and Elders for the District of Columbia. She directed nine agencies that provided an array of social services to more than 200,000 residents. She was also the director of the District's Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA), with 950 employees serving 6,000 abused and neglected children.

Governor O'Malley announced that Brian Wilbon will serve as Acting Secretary of DHR while a national search takes place for a new secretary. Wilbon currently serves as Deputy Secretary of the agency.

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